

PARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE  
*for*  
SENATE FLOOR PROCEDURES



SENATE CLERK'S OFFICE



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**SENATE  
ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**AT APPOINTED HOUR**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**PRAYER**

**ROLL CALL**

**READING OF THE JOURNAL**

**MORNING HOUR**

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES**

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE GOVERNOR**

**(COMMUNICATIONS FROM OTHER SOURCES)**

**RECOGNITION, WELCOME OF VISITORS TO SENATE**

**RESOLUTIONS, PETITIONS, AND BILLS**

**MORNING HOUR HAVING EXPIRED**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**CONSIDERATION OF THE CALENDAR**

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**RECESS OR ADJOURNMENT**

# From the Rules of the Senate

## **XIII. Debate.**

40 (a). While the presiding officer is reporting or putting any question, or the Clerk of the Senate is reporting a bill or resolution or calling the roll, or a Senator is addressing the Chair, strict order shall be observed. No Senator or other person shall give audible expression to his or her approval or disapproval of any proceeding before the Senate. The use of props is prohibited on the floor of the Senate.

40 (b). The use of audible electronic devices used for transmitting and receiving communications is prohibited in Senate committee rooms and the Senate Chamber. The use of cellular telephones is prohibited in Senate committee rooms and the Senate Chamber. Violations of this rule shall be punishable as prescribed by the Committee on Rules.

41. If words are spoken in debate that give offense, exception thereto shall be taken the same day, and be stated in writing; and in such case, if the words are decided by the presiding officer, or by the Senate, upon an appeal, to be offensive, and they are not explained or retracted by the Senator who uttered them, he shall be subject to such action as the Senate may deem necessary.

42. When any member is about to speak in debate or deliver any matter to the Senate, he shall rise from his seat, and without advancing, with due respect, address "Mr. President," confining himself strictly to the point in debate, and avoiding all disrespectful language.

43. No member shall speak more than twice upon the same subject without leave of the Senate, nor more than once, until every member choosing to speak has spoken.

44. No question shall be debated until it has been stated by the presiding officer, and the mover shall have the right to explain his views in preference to any Senator.

45. During any debate any Senator, though he has spoken to the matter, may rise and speak to the orders of the Senate if they are transgressed, in case the presiding officer does not so rise and speak, but if the presiding officer stands up at any time, he is first to be heard, and while he is standing Senators shall keep their seats.

46. No Senator shall be allowed to be interrupted while speaking, except on points of order, to correct erroneous statements, or for a Senator to answer any questions that may be stated by the Senator speaking.

47 (a). The following motions shall not be debated or spoken to except as hereinafter provided:

(i) A motion to adjourn.

(ii) A motion calling for a vote on the pending question.

(iii) A motion calling for a vote on the previous question.

(iv) A motion to suspend the Rules.

(v) A motion to close debate.

(vi) A motion to limit debate.

(vii) A motion to extend the limit of debate.

(viii) A motion to reconsider matters not debatable.

(ix) A motion to change, in case of two or more special and continuing orders.

47 (b). Upon the following motions, the mover shall be allowed five minutes to speak to his motion, to state the reasons therefor, and one member opposed to the motion shall be allowed a like time to speak to the motion, to state his objections:

(i) A motion for a special and continuing order.

(ii) A motion to appeal a ruling of the Chair.

47 (c). When a question not debatable is before the Senate, all incidental questions arising after it is stated shall be decided and settled without debate, whether on appeal or otherwise. This same Rule shall apply to all incidental questions arising after the presiding officer has put any question to the Senate.

47 (d). A motion to strike out, being lost, shall preclude neither amendment nor a motion to insert, nor a motion to strike out and insert.

47 (e). When a question is pending, no motion shall be received but to adjourn, to pass by for the day, for the pending question, for the previous question, or to amend; which several motions shall have precedence in the order in which they are herein set out.

47 (f). Except as otherwise provided herein, the provisions of Rule 47 (e), a primary motion may be substituted once.

# **I. ADDRESSING OTHERS**

1. When recognized by the Chair, address the Lt. Governor as Mr. President:

**“MR. PRESIDENT”**

2. Address another Member of the Senate **through the Chair**, by saying:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, WILL THE SENATOR FROM \_\_\_\_\_  
YIELD FOR A QUESTION?”**

3. To speak on a matter of personal privilege after the Calendar, you may rise and say:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I RISE ON A POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE.”**

4. If you have guests in the gallery, they are to be introduced in the Morning Hour before the introduction of bills. If you have guests while the Senate is taking up the Calendar, the guests are to be **introduced after the Calendar is finished**, unless directed otherwise by the floor leader.

## **II. INTRODUCING A BILL OR JOINT RESOLUTION AFTER THE CUT OFF DATE**

1. To introduce a bill or joint resolution after the cut off date:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I REQUEST UNANIMOUS CONSENT TO  
INTRODUCE A BILL/JOINT RESOLUTION RELATING TO ....”**

2. To introduce a joint memorial/commending resolution after the cut off date:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I AM SENDING TO THE CLERK’S DESK A  
JOINT RESOLUTION RELATING TO ....”**

3. To introduce a Senate resolution:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I AM SENDING TO THE CLERK’S DESK A  
SENATE RESOLUTION RELATING TO ... .”**



## **CALENDAR MOTIONS**

### **PLEASE REMEMBER:**

1. **Senate Bills are amended on second reading and engrossed.**
2. **House Bills are amended on third reading and only the amendments/  
substitute are engrossed.**
3. **If you desire to remove a bill from the block, do so after the Clerk has  
read the number of the bill and prior to final passage.**
4. **If you wish to offer floor amendments, remember that committee  
amendments and substitutes are taken up first, then floor amendments  
can be considered.**

### **III. UNCONTESTED CALENDAR, SENATE BILLS ON THIRD READING**

[The Floor Leader will move that the bills be passed in the block. Clerk will read numbers, and the bills will be passed in the block.]

### **IV. REGULAR CALENDAR, SENATE BILLS ON THIRD READING**

[Clerk will read titles and chief patron will move passage individually.]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE BILL PASS.”**

### **V. UNCONTESTED CALENDAR, SENATE BILLS ON SECOND READING**

[Clerk will read the number and the chief patron will move passage of amendments or substitute.]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE AMENDMENTS/  
SUBSTITUTE BE AGREED TO.”**

[After adoption of amendments or substitute, the Floor Leader will move that the bills be engrossed in the block.]

## **VI. REGULAR CALENDAR, SENATE BILLS ON SECOND READING**

[Clerk will read the number and the chief patron will move passage of amendments or substitute.]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE AMENDMENTS/  
SUBSTITUTE BE AGREED TO.”**

then, after the voice vote:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE BILL BE ENGROSSED AND  
ADVANCED TO ITS THIRD READING.”**

## **VII. UNCONTESTED CALENDAR, HOUSE BILLS ON THIRD READING**

[The Floor Leader will move that the bills be passed in the block; however, a motion is needed to adopt any amendments. The motion should be made by the Chair of the committee which considered the bill OR by the Senator who is carrying the bill for the House patron.]

**“Mr. President, I move that the amendments/ substitute be agreed to.”**

## **VIII. REGULAR CALENDAR, HOUSE BILLS ON** **THIRD READING**

[A motion is needed to adopt any amendments. The motion should be made by the Chair of the committee which considered the bill OR by the Senator who is carrying the bill for the House patron.]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE AMENDMENTS/  
SUBSTITUTE BE AGREED TO.”**

then, after the voice vote:

and after any debate:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT H.B. \_\_\_\_ PASS.”**

## **IX. FLOOR AMENDMENTS OR SUBSTITUTE**

[If you have floor amendments, please take them to the front desk to be copied and distributed OR the Clerk will read to the Senate. If you have a floor substitute, the Clerk's Desk will need time to copy it for distribution. If you elect to copy your amendments prior to submission, the Clerk's Desk staff will need 50 copies. The Clerk's staff will distribute all amendments and substitutes.]

PLEASE REMEMBER: If the bill comes out of committee with an amendment or substitute, that matter is taken up first. **AFTER** the adoption or rejection of the committee amendments/substitute, **THEN** floor amendments/substitute can be taken up.

[First motion (if amendments have been distributed)--]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE READING OF THE AMENDMENTS/SUBSTITUTE BE WAIVED.”**

[Second motion -- ]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE AMENDMENTS/SUBSTITUTE BE AGREED TO.”**

## **X. CONFERENCE MOTIONS (Senate Bills)**

1. To agree to/reject the House amendments/substitute:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE SENATE CONCUR WITH THE HOUSE AMENDMENTS/SUBSTITUTE.”**

[or]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE SENATE REJECT THE HOUSE AMENDMENTS/SUBSTITUTE.”**

[REMEMBER: If you wish to reject the House’s amendments/substitute, you may move to reject the amendments/substitute, but the Chair must always put the question in the positive.]

2. To recede from our objection to the House amendments:

[PLEASE NOTE: This motion is only appropriate if the bill and amendments are in the possession of the Senate Clerk.]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE SENATE RECEDE FROM OUR OBJECTION TO THE HOUSE AMENDMENTS/SUBSTITUTE.”**

then agree to the House amendments:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE SENATE CONCUR WITH THE HOUSE AMENDMENTS/SUBSTITUTE.”**

3. To accede to the request for a committee of conference:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE SENATE ACCEDE TO THE HOUSE REQUEST FOR A COMMITTEE OF CONFERENCE ON THE BILL.”**

4. To agree to/reject conference report:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE SENATE AGREE TO THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT.”**

[or]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE SENATE REJECT THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT.”**

## **XI. CONFERENCE MOTIONS (House Bills)**

1. Senate insists on its amendments:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE SENATE INSIST ON ITS AMENDMENTS/SUBSTITUTE AND RESPECTFULLY REQUEST A COMMITTEE OF CONFERENCE.”**

2. Senate recedes from its amendments:

[PLEASE NOTE: This motion is only appropriate if the bill and amendments are in the possession of the Senate Clerk.]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE SENATE RECEDE FROM ITS AMENDMENTS TO THE HOUSE BILL.”**

3. Senate agrees to/rejects conference report:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE SENATE AGREE TO THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT.”**

[or]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE SENATE REJECT THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT.”**



## **XII. GOVERNOR’S AMENDMENTS TO A BILL**

1. To adopt or reject the Governor’s recommendations:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE TO AMEND THE BILL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RECOMMENDATION(S) OF THE GOVERNOR.”**

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE SENATE REJECT THE GOVERNOR’S RECOMMENDATION(S).”**

2. If motion is rejected, then a further motion may be made as follows:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE BILL BE PASSED IN THE ENROLLED FORM.”**

3. To override a Governor’s veto:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE BILL PASS IN THE ENROLLED FORM, NOTWITHSTANDING THE OBJECTIONS OF THE GOVERNOR.”**

[or]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE BILL BE PASSED IN THE ENROLLED FORM.”**

### **XIII. RECONSIDERATION**

**REMEMBER: YOU CAN MOVE TO RECONSIDER A MATTER ONLY IF YOU PREVIOUSLY VOTED ON THE PREVAILING SIDE OF THE QUESTION.**

1. To reconsider a passed bill:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, HAVING VOTED ON THE PREVAILING SIDE OF SENATE BILL/HOUSE BILL \_\_\_\_, I MOVE TO RECONSIDER THE VOTE BY WHICH THE BILL PASSED.”**

2. To reconsider a defeated bill:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, HAVING VOTED ON THE PREVAILING SIDE OF SENATE BILL/HOUSE BILL \_\_\_\_, I MOVE TO RECONSIDER THE VOTE BY WHICH THE BILL WAS DEFEATED.”**

3. To reconsider amendments/substitute agreed to:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, HAVING VOTED ON THE PREVAILING SIDE, I MOVE TO RECONSIDER THE VOTE BY WHICH THE AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL/HOUSE BILL \_\_\_\_ WAS AGREED TO.”**

4. To reconsider an amendment/substitute rejected:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, HAVING VOTED ON THE PREVAILING SIDE, I MOVE TO RECONSIDER THE VOTE BY WHICH THE AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL/HOUSE BILL \_\_\_\_ WAS REJECTED.”**

5. To reconsider a Senate bill’s engrossment and third reading in order to return it to its amendable stage:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, HAVING VOTED ON THE PREVAILING SIDE, I MOVE TO RECONSIDER THE VOTE BY WHICH SENATE BILL \_\_\_\_\_ WAS ENGROSSED AND ADVANCED TO ITS THIRD READING.”**

6. To reconsider any motion:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, HAVING VOTED ON THE PREVAILING SIDE OF SENATE BILL/HOUSE BILL \_\_\_\_\_, I MOVE TO RECONSIDER THE VOTE BY WHICH \_\_\_\_\_.”**

## **XIV.MISCELLANEOUS MOTIONS**

1. To pass a bill by for the day:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT SENATE BILL/HOUSE BILL  
\_\_\_\_\_ BE PASSED BY FOR THE DAY.”**

2. To take bill out of the block after Clerk reads number of bill for purpose of taking up after the block:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I REQUEST THAT SENATE BILL/HOUSE BILL  
\_\_\_\_\_ BE REMOVED FROM THE BLOCK.”**

3. To take a bill out of the block after Clerk reads number of bill for purpose of passing by for the day:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I REQUEST THAT SENATE BILL/HOUSE BILL  
\_\_\_\_\_ BE REMOVED FROM THE BLOCK AND GO BY FOR THE  
DAY.”**

4. To request a leave of absence:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST A LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR MY DESK MATE, THE SENATOR FROM \_\_\_\_\_, ON ACCOUNT OF PRESSING PERSONAL BUSINESS.”**

5. To take up a commending or memorial resolution out of order:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE RULES BE SUSPENDED AND S.J.R./H.J.R. \_\_\_\_\_ BE TAKEN UP FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.”**

[President puts question]

[The Clerk reads the title of the resolution.]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE RESOLUTION BE AGREED TO.”**

[President puts question]

6. To take up a Senate Bill out of order:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE RULES BE SUSPENDED, THE COMMITTEE ON \_\_\_\_\_ BE DISCHARGED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THE BILL, THE FIRST READING OF THE TITLE BE DISPENSED WITH, AND SENATE BILL \_\_\_\_\_ BE TAKEN UP FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.”**

[President puts question]

[Clerk reads title for second time and indicates if there are amendments or substitute.]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THE AMENDMENTS BE AGREED TO.”**

[President puts question]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THE BILL BE ENGROSSED AND ADVANCED TO ITS THIRD READING.”**

[President puts question]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE RULES BE SUSPENDED AND THE THIRD CONSTITUTIONAL READING OF THE TITLE OF THE BILL BE DISPENSED WITH.”**

[President puts question]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THE BILL PASS.”**

[President puts question]

7. To take up a House Bill out of order:

[Clerk reads title.]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THAT THE RULES BE SUSPENDED, THE COMMITTEE ON \_\_\_\_ BE DISCHARGED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THE BILL, THE CONSTITUTIONAL READINGS OF THE TITLE BE DISPENSED WITH, AND HOUSE BILL \_\_\_\_ BE TAKEN UP FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.”**

[President puts question]

[Clerk indicates there are amendments or substitute.]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THE AMENDMENTS/SUBSTITUTE BE AGREED TO.”**

[President puts question]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, I MOVE THE BILL PASS.”**

[President puts question]

## **XV. ASKING A PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION:**

1. If you would like the President to make a Ruling on a procedure or Rule of the Senate:

**“MR. PRESIDENT, POINT OF ORDER.”**

2. If you would like to know where the Senate is on the Calendar, or if you would like to know if certain amendments were agreed to, etc. [This is a method of clarifying a procedure.]

**“MR. PRESIDENT, PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY.”**



## **Reminders from the Clerk:**

1. Please do not walk in front of the Senator who is speaking.
2. Please do not yell across the chamber.
3. Please do not walk or talk during points of personal privilege.
4. Please do not walk or talk during memorial resolutions.
5. Senators should not engage press on the floor 15 minutes before session or 5 minutes after session (including recess and at ease).
6. Please address questions through the President.
7. Please do not mention email messages in your remarks.
8. Please do not personally introduce your family members. Please have your seatmate do so.
9. It is not appropriate to introduce lobbyists in the gallery.
10. Please do not read statements from lobbying groups during debate. This is appropriate for a point of personal privilege.
11. Please do not introduce guests until you get a green sheet from the doorkeepers.
12. Please do not take memorial resolutions out of the block unless they are a statewide elected official, a member of the General Assembly, a member of the Virginia congressional delegation, or a legislative staff member. This is the custom, usage, and practice of the Senate.